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New York

President:	Mr. Legwaila	(Botswana)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Somavía
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Germany	Mr. Eitel
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Mano Queta
	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
	Indonesia	Mr. Wisnumurti
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Poland	Mr. Wlosowicz
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mrs. Albright

Agenda

The situation in Burundi

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Burundi (S/1996/116)

96-85256 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.30 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of March, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Her Excellency Mrs. Madeleine Korbel Albright, Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, for her service as President of the Security Council for the month of February 1996. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Albright for the great diplomatic skill with which she conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Burundi

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Burundi (S/1996/116)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Burundi, the Congo, Norway, Rwanda and Tunisia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Terence (Burundi) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Abibi (Congo), Mr. Aass (Norway), Mr. Bakuramutsa (Rwanda) and Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Burundi, document S/1996/116.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1996/162, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following other documents: S/1996/110 and S/1996/121, letters dated 14 and 19 February 1996 respectively from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; and S/1996/146, letter dated 23 February 1996 from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Zaire to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The first speaker is the representative of Burundi, on whom I now call.

Mr. Terence (Burundi): I am deeply thankful and pleased, Sir, to be addressing the Security Council on behalf of my Government under your presidency of the Council. Your previous involvement in the peace negotiations and your familiarity with African problems and issues will certainly have a positive impact on the Council's debate and its outcome.

Your predecessor, Mrs. Albright, offered me several opportunities to deal with her, even at the climax of an issue in which she was personally involved. I am thankful to her for having listened to me several times in relation to the Burundi crisis.

(spoke in Spanish)

I cannot fail to thank His Excellency Ambassador Juan Somavía, last month's coordinator of the non-aligned caucus, for his effectiveness, skilful coordination and attentiveness, which I personally experienced and which formed the basis of the draft resolution before the Security Council today.

(spoke in English)

I am also thankful to the representative of Egypt and his delegation, who have succeeded the delegation of Chile in coordinating the activities of the non-aligned caucus relating to Burundi.

(spoke in French)

A questioning of intentions, offensive to the Government and the people of Burundi, has been the basis for a series of negotiations in which you, Sir, have been involved. In the wake of a flood of highly pessimistic reports, in recent weeks a political and media hurricane has been unleashed upon Burundi from the four corners of the Earth.

In his report (S/1996/116) of 15 February 1996, the Secretary-General strongly advocates a multinational military force designed to descend upon Burundi on the smallest pretext, like a vulture upon its prey. This extreme proposal was dictated by a wish to protect Burundi from Rwandan-style genocide. Those who prophesy such an event would have it that its recurrence in Burundi is a near certainty in the light of the geographic environment Burundi shares with Rwanda and because of the ethnic, cultural and social similarities between the two countries, and that it is inevitable that the tragedy that took place in Rwanda in 1994 should be exported to its neighbour. For the people of Burundi, this mechanical fusion of the two countries calls its intentions into question and is offensive in many respects. A number of clear facts illustrate how forced this generalization is.

In fact, the genocide in Rwanda was spread over three decades. It ebbed and flowed with an intensity that depended on the times and on the country's leadership. The first detonator was discharged in 1959 and the explosion reached full intensity in 1994. Following the initial blast, in 1961, the people of Burundi by no means yielded to the Rwandese trigger, but rather rose up in unity and set an example to the world by unanimously rallying around a single ideal — national unity — and around a single leader, Prince Rwagasore.

Throughout the existence of the two previous Rwandese Republics, persistent efforts to turn Burundi into a *sui generis* apartheid State resulted in failure; however, the opposition of the coalition of the people always ensured the failure of periodic attempts by Burundi groups seeking that goal.

In 1993, all the political entities of Rwanda — some institutional, such as the Government, its army and its party, and others circumstantial, such as the enraged militia — held back nothing.

The media in Rwanda, both in print and on the air, spewed their venom in Burundi with a view to the assassination of our beloved President, in order to pit one national community against another. The demonic and excessive means used succeeded in stirring up certain infected groups against innocent people. This deadly madness caused dozens of human lives to be lost, both Hutu and Tutsi. However, the progress of such means was broken thanks to the visceral repugnance of almost the entire people of Burundi at such a Nazi doctrine and thanks to the organization, bravery and patriotism of the security forces.

Despite the failings attributable to some irresolute Burundis in their desire for political survival even on the ruins of their country, the people of Burundi and the army showed themselves to be utterly impermeable to the lessons of Rwanda. Already hardened to and inoculated against the incitements to genocide of the earlier Rwandese regimes, the people of Burundi, its Government and its army were aware down to their very marrow of the supreme need to reject and repel even more strongly that ignominious model. It is therefore shocking to impute to them any intention or inclination whatsoever to model the nation's future on the past of Rwanda. Burundi, by its very character, identity and sense of honour, is not able to duplicate that scourge.

In predicting disaster of genocidal dimensions, many forget that the Government and the national army formed a coalition to restore peace and security. There are three new phenomena that give us hope that the dynamic of peace will be irreversible, even if there should be new developments.

The first of these phenomena is the strengthening of governmental solidarity. At the very beginning of this year, overcoming certain obstacles that in the past had jeopardized the common good, the members of the Government that emerged from the 12 political parties that signed the Convention on Governance agreed on strategies to be followed in order to restore peace. Combining action and will, under the leadership of the Head of State and the Prime Minister, the Ministers, political leaders, members of the National Assembly and State officials and functionaries have tried to outdo each other in zeal throughout the Republic. In this full-bore crusade, a standard message has been disseminated in public meetings in order to rally the three main actors — the population, the national army and the public administration to a sacred, tripartite union. This triad is allied unshakeably against the real enemy of the homeland: any armed terrorist or violent fanatic. In just a few weeks the campaign to mobilize for peace has already produced very encouraging results, as was attested to by the Government following its special

meeting on 7 February last, which was devoted to an evaluation of overall security and as was confirmed in a message from the Head of Government to the Security Council on 18 February.

The second of these phenomena is the new and very healthy rallying of the population to work towards peace. After having been the first victim terrorizing, plundering armed bands, the population shook off its torpor and rose up massively in support of peace. Having identified the true enemy and valiantly resisting any incitement to self-destruction, peasants from all national groups have taken charge of their own defence in the various parts of the country where terrorists still dare to act.

Acting in good faith — out of ignorance or out of complicity with rebel groups that have poisoned public opinion — various diplomatic and media circles have legitimized the demonization of the Burundi army. Our military corps deserves treatment quite different from the litany of defamation against it, which is promoted by armed bands that are terrified of it. The President of the Republic, a direct and privileged witness of the army's code of conduct, as its supreme commander, wishing to pay it a well-deserved tribute during a press conference on 16 February 1996, described the army of Burundi as "the most positive institution of all society during this crisis". This praise for the security forces by the President of the Republic is shared by the population itself. Regardless of what its unrepentant detractors may say, the fact is that the army of Burundi is now the most powerful catalyst for democratic institutions.

The third phenomenon is the burgeoning alliance between the population and the army. Jealously attached to its security, the population has unhesitatingly stood up to the trouble-makers, tracking them down and beating them up. As beneficiaries and privileged witnesses of the patriotic dedication of the army, citizens have joined it in the combat against terrorists by confronting them and confiscating their weapons. Thanks to their confidence in the army and to the shining fact that it is their sure and mighty shield, the peasants who have felt threatened are mobilizing against their assailants, in the expectation that security forces will arrive, or they hasten to where the forces are. There is thus a sacred alliance developing between the population and the national army.

In the letter which I sent on behalf of my Government to the President of the Security Council on 18 January 1996, I highlighted the war of nerves being waged in Burundi by the chronic mention of the spectre of military intervention. The Burundi Government's opposition to this option is in no way a result of its army's powerlessness to confront it. The army of Burundi is completely prepared to confront any expeditionary corps, regardless of its humanitarian or military label. It is also able to increase its defence and counter-attack capacity with both human and material resources. However, there are countervailing reasons impelling the Government to militate against not only foreign troops but also against any reference to such a possibility.

The main countervailing reason is that, at a moment when the campaign of mobilization for peace is in full swing under the direction of our Government and all the political bodies in the country, nothing could be more harmful than a polarization over military options. Although there can be no excuse for such solutions, even at the high point of a crisis, they would be even more damaging right now, when all the signs are that the forced march towards peace is actually happening. Given this extremely positive development, anyone would say that it would be to the honour of the Security Council and the Secretary-General not only to stay with this process but to use diplomatic, political and financial means to ensure that it succeeds overwhelmingly.

The Security Council as a whole supports the Convention on Governance and the Government which resulted from it. The various earlier pronouncements by the Security Council and its recent resolution 1040 (1996) of 29 January 1996 strikingly illustrate the Council's constant concern to support the institutions of Burundi which are based on the Convention on Governance. On many occasions, the Secretary-General has emphasized the obvious need to give the coalition Government all the support it requires and to safeguard the Convention on Governance at all costs. The positions of the Security Council and the Secretary-General are in perfect harmony with the socio-political imperatives now obtaining in Burundi. The odds are that military solutions would expose the Government to very great risk and that the Convention on Governance would be seriously jeopardized if not fatally undermined.

Amongst the damaging consequences that any military option might have, we have to say that the Government and the country would be put up for grabs by it. Firstly, the armed bands — which have been put to rout and are facing extinction — would do their damnedest to raise the stakes, under the delusion that the deteriorating situation would force the stand-by military contingents to come in. Secondly, some pretenders to

power — who are to be found both within the presidential majority and in the opposition — would leap at this godsend and use it as a stick with which to beat a Government standing accused of being in cahoots with the pro-military-intervention lobby.

Having been constantly traumatized by chronic threats of military adventures for nearly two and a half years, the population and politicians would find even more difficult the establishment of a foreign stand-by army designed to intervene in Burundi.

The Charter would be flagrantly violated, as paragraph 7 of Article 2 prohibits the United Nations from interfering with the national sovereignty of its Member States. In the case in point, this much lauded multinational military force, which has been given a humanitarian cloak to wear, would be tantamount to an affront to the State of Burundi. In the event that the so highly dramatized catastrophe occurs, it would be up to the Government of Burundi and its army to decide when and if to ask for humanitarian assistance.

Some of the main actors in the United Nations are trying to justify their stated choice of an expeditionary corps in Burundi by adducing their need to look like Caesar's wife in front of the international community. Using the same handy logic ourselves, I hardly need to prove that our Government and our army too would be absolutely bound to batten down the hatches against the fury and the wrath they would call down on themselves from people and politicians alike in the event of a military adventure, even a far-off or hypothetical one. And for all that, if we do commit national suicide, it would be the people of Burundi themselves who would be blamed for it, because it is in the first place and in the last resort up to them to take responsibility for their fate.

Any military option would lead to the mediation missions — those of the Secretary-General, his Special Representative, the OAU, the European Union and the prestigious Nyerere-Carter group — being blocked or even blamed. The very special importance that my Government attaches to the roles of those former Heads of State has been publicly highlighted by my ardent plea for an explicit mention of the Carter Center in the draft resolution. I am much obliged to the Security Council for heeding my repeated appeals on this subject.

If we turn to the matter of the bipolar antagonism between a United Nations contingent and the army of Burundi, we must all be aware that any political decision of historic scope and international dimensions demands that we examine the most serious possible consequences beforehand. In touting the idea of a multinational military force, we are losing sight of the fact that it would give rise to a state of constant alert between the force and Burundi. A miniature cold war would result, like the one between the former ideological blocs. Feeding on the psychosis of fear they induced in each other, East and West were constantly suspicious of and spied on each other and constantly getting themselves ready to wipe each other out. Given that forewarned is forearmed, any open or covert machinations on the official level or concocted in United Nations offices or hatched in foreign capitals would force Burundi and its army to develop parallel plans to review and even bolster its own arsenal and troop numbers and, naturally, to conclude useful alliances in order to deal with any eventuality. Under such conditions, bipolar antagonism would become a permanent feature and would sometimes flare in time to the revelations of the two-way traffic in spying between the United Nations contingent based abroad and the army of Burundi operating on its own national territory.

Turning now to the national coalition against military boosterism: the Secretary-General's report suggests that the army of Burundi is split into two camps: one, under the influence of Tutsi extremists, which is sworn to total hostility against United Nations troops; and another made up of moderates who are getting ready to welcome them in. In fact, to attribute to any part of the army the intention not only of consenting to but even tolerating a foreign military presence on Burundi's soil would be like saying the ground is up and the sky is down. From the Minister of Defence to the Chiefs of Staff of the army and gendarmerie and right on down to the rawest recruits, the thought of an expeditionary force outside Burundi quite literally makes the hackles of the entire military rise.

The military response is almost unanimously echoed by civil society. The massive demonstrations organized last week in Bujumbura to pay a resounding tribute and express immeasurable gratitude to all the honourable members of the Security Council for their realism, which dictated the measures contained in this draft resolution are in accordance with national realities, the solemn declarations of vigorous protest against the Secretary-General's proposal by various political groups and civil-society organizations — notably the League of Human Rights and the Economic League — and the stream of messages from many Burundian citizens within the country and abroad constitutes resounding proof that

nearly all Burundian people reject in no uncertain terms any military solution to the national problem.

In conclusion, the report (S/1996/116) of the Secretary-General of 15 February last focuses almost exclusively on the military option and repeats — I emphasize, repeats — other alternatives already contained in presidential statements or earlier resolutions adopted by the Security Council. At a time when mankind is moving inexorably towards the end of this century, towards the threshold of the next millennium, is it not imperative that the international community's proclivity and ability to resolve all conflicts by peaceful means prevail over the tendency to resolve conflicts with weapons? Would it not be better to envisage the creation of a new world for our future generations, of a better human race, given to bringing peace through peace rather than achieving peace by the sword?

The President: I thank the representative of Burundi for his kind words addressed to me.

I should like to inform the Council that I have just received a letter from the representative of Nigeria in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Egunsola took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union, and the following countries also associate themselves with this statement: Poland, Cyprus, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania and Slovakia.

Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. Your skill, experience, foresight and wit are our best guarantees of a very profitable month. At the same time, I wish to thank the Permanent Representative of the United States, Ambassador Albright, for her eminently professional, dedicated and incisive leadership in the month of February.

At a formal meeting of the Security Council on 29 January 1996, the European Union made clear its views on the situation in Burundi and on how the tension could be defused and the stalemate in the political dialogue ended. The formal statement made on that occasion expressed full support for the efforts of the United Nations and the regional organizations concerned, particularly the Organization of African Unity. The European Union also pointed out that the only way to permanently end the crisis was through a political solution. The statement underlined the hope for a renewal of the spirit of reconciliation in Burundi. Another potential humanitarian catastrophe in the region can be averted only if all the interested parties realize that there is no viable solution outside of dialogue. War and violence must be discarded as an option, and we all must strive in this direction.

During the last month, a number of developments have taken place that, in our view, can greatly contribute to the search for renewed peace and stability. The situation in the country seems to have improved somewhat, due to stronger cohesion within the Government. The strong willingness of the international community to address the situation and keep it under constant review has also had an influence on the political situation in Burundi.

The United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the European Union have mobilized their efforts and are working in close coordination. This is a critical factor. Once again we wish to express our confidence in the capacity of the Secretary-General and of the eminent personalities, especially former Tanzanian President Nyerere, to promote a climate of trust, of confidence between the parties. The Special Envoy of the European Union for the Great Lakes region, Mr. Aldo Ajello, will give them his full support. Mr. Ajello will stay in close contact with the Government of the countries of the region in order to avoid duplication of initiatives.

For the reasons I have mentioned, we believe that the draft resolution that the Security Council will vote on today contains all the elements that are needed, at this stage, to support the progress we have been witnessing along the path of dialogue, which should be strengthened and broadened. The draft resolution is also very clear when it warns the parties that the international community may be forced to change its attitude if there are acts of violence and attempts at destabilization.

We believe it is right to encourage the Secretary-General to continue consultations for further steps toward supporting a comprehensive dialogue and for a possible response, in the unfortunate event of widespread violence and a serious deterioration in the situation.

Political support is important, as is the willingness of the international community to concretely assist the Government of Burundi in development programmes for rehabilitating the country. The European Union is the largest donor in Burundi. The Union and its member States are already contributing in the critical fields of humanitarian and human rights assistance, as well as assistance to the judiciary and to the police. The European Union's willingness to provide this much-needed assistance will nevertheless depend to a great extent on the Government's continuation of its efforts at dialogue and reconciliation.

I shall conclude by expressing our great satisfaction over the inclusion in the draft resolution of a strong reference to the need to intensify the preparations for convening a Regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the area. We understand that the Conference needs careful preparation, and that a number of uncertainties have yet to be overcome. Still, it is our strong belief that such a Conference can provide a significant opportunity to address, within a broader perspective, issues of political and economic stability; humanitarian questions; and issues of peace and security in the area.

The President: I thank the representative of Italy for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Allow me, Mr. President, to begin by expressing our warmest congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for March. I should also like to express our confidence that your wide diplomatic experience and renowned wisdom will enable you to discharge fully the responsibilities of the presidency. It gives me pleasure also to give your our assurance that the Egyptian delegation will cooperate with you fully this month.

I should like also to express our deepest appreciation to Ambassador Madeleine Albright and to the United States delegation for the excellence that characterized the American presidency of the Council during February.

The Council's consideration today of the situation in Burundi, for the second time in five weeks, bears witness to the international community's determination to follow developments in that fraternal African country closely. We share with it a common link, that great artery, the Nile.

The draft resolution before the Council is a true reflection of the efforts made since the Council adopted its resolution 1040 (1996) of 29 January, firstly to achieve national reconciliation and stability in Burundi by putting the presidency in the hands of the forces of moderation and tolerance rather than of the advocates of extremism, fanaticism and hatred and then to begin a national debate that would include all parties and would complement the Agreement embodying a Convention on Governance, signed on 10 September 1994, that covered power-sharing.

Here we emphasize once more the responsibility the people of Burundi themselves bear for normalizing the situation in their country; I would refer in this context to the statement by the Permanent Representative of Burundi just now in which he stressed his Government's commitment to normalization.

The Secretary-General's report gives a comprehensive and objective review and an accurate analysis of the causes and scale of the political tension in Burundi over the past two months as a result of the attempts by certain extremist forces to put pressure on the Head of State and depose him. These attempts were on the point of blowing away what stability there was in the country.

On the humanitarian level, there has certainly been no improvement, especially since the International Committee of the Red Cross and some other international relief agencies have halted their activities as a result of attacks on their personnel and local headquarters. This prompted the Secretary-General to send the High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs. Ogata, to Burundi and to dispatch a technical team to Bujumbura to consult with the Government on means of protecting expatriate personnel and guaranteeing their security.

The first visit by President Nyerere earlier this year did not yield a positive outcome in terms of dialogue, and no substantive progress has been made in implementing the recommendations of the Cairo Conference of Heads of States of the Great Lakes Region organized by the Carter Center on 29 November 1995. The situation in Burundi, in a nutshell, was as summed up by the

President of Burundi himself on 2 January this year: the country was on the point of collapse.

To avoid an explosion and contain the crisis, so averting a humanitarian tragedy similar to the one in Rwanda, the Secretary-General has given us a number of preventive options in his report. These options were certainly not ruled out by the Council in its resolution 1040 (1996), in which the Council emphasized the need to begin a serious national debate that would include all political forces, including extremist ones, as the only way to solve the present crisis. Indeed, Egypt supports the new approach proposed by the Secretary-General, combining preventive diplomacy with pre-emptive measures and bringing all possible pressure to bear on all parties concerned so that they take more positive positions.

In this context, Egypt expresses its support for any humanitarian effort to assist the people of Burundi in the event that the humanitarian situation there deteriorates further.

The delegation of Egypt has followed with keen interest recent international and regional efforts to monitor the situation in Burundi in particular and in the Great Lakes region in general. The most significant of these efforts have been the sixty-third session of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity and the Addis Ababa meeting on 29 February to follow up the results of the meeting in Bujumbura, which was attended not only by former President Nyerere but also by many international and regional organizations, and at which 20 or so African countries were also represented.

We are most gratified to note that former President Nyerere, with international support, intends to play a greater role as a coordinator and focus for the efforts of all these organizations. We hope that the political forces in Burundi will respond positively to former President Nyerere's proposals to defuse the crisis and to prepare for the convening of a Regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region. We also hope that the meeting scheduled to be held in Tunisia late this month under the auspices of the Carter Center will be a preparatory meeting for that Regional Conference.

The Organization of African Unity has played an important role in Burundi since 1993 in support of moderation, tolerance, peaceful coexistence and confidence-building. It has played a pioneering role, despite the scarcity of its resources, in promptly stepping in to try to halt the deterioration of the situation in Burundi. It has sent an observer mission for dual political and military purposes. Its military observers are currently providing protection to the officials of the international Commission of Inquiry. Even though this role was not initially welcomed by certain parties in Burundi, and even though it received no political or material support from other international organizations, it has today become one of the major axes of development, reaffirming the importance of the regional organizations' support for containing crises and conflicts under Chapter VIII of the Charter.

The draft resolution before the Council reflects the required balance needed to address the present situation in Burundi. It focuses on the need to support national dialogue and the importance of that dialogue's succeeding. At the same time, it calls upon the international community to continue its preparations aimed at addressing any adverse developments that could lead to a deterioration in the situation and an increase in violence.

The delegation of Egypt will vote for the draft resolution because it is convinced that there is an undeniable need to ensure success for the efforts being made to restore stability and security in Burundi in particular and the Great Lakes region in general, and to put an end to the current crisis, which is hindering the economic and political development to which the peoples of the region aspire.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Gomersall (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Allow me very briefly to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation for your assumption of the presidency of the Council this month and to say what a pleasure it always is to work under your guidance.

We also thank Ambassador Albright and the United States delegation for the very clear and firm leadership which they gave to the Council in the month of February.

The British Government continues to follow the situation in Burundi with concern, and we shall vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Council today. I should like to pay a tribute to the Caucus of the Non-Aligned Movement for its work in bringing this draft resolution to the consideration of the Council.

The draft resolution focuses — rightly, in our view — on preventive diplomacy to assist efforts at finding a lasting political solution and it encourages the international community to help underpin those efforts in support of continuing political progress.

The message which this draft resolution sends to the leaders of Burundi, both within and outside the Government, is crystal clear. We call upon all parties to refrain from violence and to engage seriously in political dialogue. We are prepared to support a dialogue from outside and to provide international assistance of a political, preventive and material kind in support of the progress which they achieve. The initiative and the responsibility lie with the Government of Burundi itself.

There have been some encouraging signs since January this year, when the Council adopted resolution 1040 (1996). These positive developments deserve to be acknowledged, providing as they do the basic elements for political progress. It is clear, for instance, that there has been a reduction in tension, attributable largely to the Government's recent pacification campaign. We are also glad that a date has now been set for the National Debate. The parties in Burundi must now build on these relatively positive developments and start the process of a genuine political dialogue in support of the principles of the Convention on Governance.

While Burundi's leaders are ultimately responsible for restoring hope and stability to their country, the draft resolution addresses many ways in which the international community can help. It encourages international assistance and expertise in support of a continuing political dialogue. In this context, we strongly support the collective efforts of former President Nyerere, former President Touré, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Burundi, the Organization of African Unity, the European Union and eminent regional leaders appointed by the Cairo Conference of Heads of States of the Great Lakes Region. All the actors have their roles to play, and it will be important as they go about their work that their efforts are properly coordinated, a process which, we are glad to see, has already begun with their meeting in Addis Ababa on 29 February.

The draft resolution also envisages more concrete forms of assistance. It looks to the possibility of a United Nations radio station to promote reconciliation and dialogue. More generally, it requests further contingency planning on other steps to support a comprehensive dialogue. In our view, that might include the possibility of an international presence to underpin the political process.

The situation in Burundi remains volatile. The Secretary-General's report depicts a sobering picture of the suffering that might result if the parties in Burundi do not build on the fragile gains which have been achieved. We know that Burundi will not rid itself easily or quickly of political violence and extremism. We and the Council therefore remain prepared to consider further measures against those who reject this approach and choose to pursue violent means to achieve their aims. We fully support the call in the draft resolution for continued contingency planning for a humanitarian response against the possibility of widespread violence and a worsening of the humanitarian situation.

We believe that international attention should continue to be focused on Burundi and that this Council should remain closely seized of developments. There is a lot to be gained for the people of Burundi and of the region as a whole by a concerted, major push to advance the political dialogue. The means are there if the will is there. We hope that the voice of the Council and of the international community expressed in this meeting today will be clearly heeded by those who hold Burundi's future in their hands.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Wisnumurti (Indonesia): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March, and to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation. My delegation is confident that your demonstrated diplomatic and leadership qualities will enable the Council to carry out the tasks before it expeditiously and efficiently.

I should like also to extend my congratulations to Ambassador Albright, the Permanent Representative of the United States, for the excellent manner in which she presided over the work of the Council for the month of February.

The Indonesian delegation would like also to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his efforts to keep the Council informed on the volatile and fragile situation in Burundi. His letter to the Council of 3 January 1996 (S/1996/8) and his most recent report, of 15 February 1996 (S/1996/116), provide ample evidence

that swift action must be taken to avert a worsening of the situation in that devastated country.

The Indonesian delegation is pleased to note that the situation in Burundi has recently demonstrated some signs of stabilizing. In particular, we welcome the improved coordination between the President and the Prime Minister in promoting peace, as reflected in the Government's third campaign for the return of peace. Moreover, my delegation was encouraged by the fact that the extremists' call for a "dead city" operation met with resistance from the general population.

There still exists, however, the potential for escalating tragedy and unrelenting human suffering in light of the fact that little progress has been achieved towards the establishment of a broad-based political dialogue between the parties to this conflict. The situation therefore requires urgent action if Burundi is to move further away from the brink of disaster, which may indeed include rampant ethnic, even genocidal violence. My delegation believes that further procrastination and ambivalence will not only have severe consequences for Burundi, but will also encourage the spread of instability throughout the Great Lakes region. In this context, my delegation welcomes the recent proliferation of regional and international peace initiatives, particularly the efforts of former Presidents Nyerere and Carter.

The Indonesian delegation recognizes the enormous task and the challenges facing the Government of Burundi in implementing measures, with the assistance of the international community, to promote a climate of stability and trust. Such a climate would give impetus for dialogue, accompanied by mutual accommodation, to occur in Burundi.

My delegation observes that the Secretary-General's report presents a sombre picture of internal conditions in Burundi. Ideological differences, extremist positions, the uprooting of people and crumbling humanitarian conditions make for an explosive situation. Nevertheless, we believe that the draft resolution under consideration contains an array of important measures to promote national reconciliation and dialogue. Moreover, we believe that the combination of these measures can encourage an atmosphere that will temper the vast differences separating the parties and allow to be heard the voice of moderation and reason that this crisis so desperately needs.

It is my delegation's view that the crisis in Burundi needs to be addressed in a comprehensive manner, specifically at the regional and international levels. The inherent complexities of the situation require such an approach, bearing in mind that developments in Burundi and the solutions offered do not occur in a vacuum. We believe, therefore, that an approach that recognizes the mutually inclusive nature of the underlying problems in Burundi and the broader Great Lakes region — such as refugees, economic dislocation and ethnic struggles — will prove more beneficial.

In this connection, my delegation cannot foresee a lasting peace taking hold in Burundi in the absence of an open dialogue between the parties that addresses the underlying issues concerning the establishment of a permanent political settlement and the creation of conditions conducive to national reconciliation. We therefore urge all concerned parties to renew their commitment to the national debate and to increase their efforts towards achieving national reconciliation. Additionally, since the nature of the problems found in Burundi is such that they have regional ramifications, my delegation supports the idea of convening a Regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region focusing on issues of political and economic stability as well as on peace and security concerns.

While my delegation fully supports all the efforts aimed at promoting a broad-based dialogue, we nevertheless believe that this objective could be further advanced through the consideration of a contingency plan for a rapid humanitarian response in the event that the situation deteriorates rapidly. Such a step would, in our view, allow the international community to be more prepared to respond effectively should this actually arise. Moreover, my delegation believes that in an environment of impunity and economic uncertainty, lasting peace will prove elusive and the pattern of violence will continue. We therefore attach much importance to the need for the international community to lend assistance to reform Burundi's military, its police and its judicial system, as well as to provide development programmes and support.

The Indonesian delegation wishes to emphasize, however, that while the international community stands ready to initiate a number of measures to bring stability to Burundi, these would be to no avail without the cooperation of the parties concerned, internally and externally. This should include the parties' extending full cooperation to the Commission of Inquiry, exercising caution and restraint and refraining from any activities

that could incite further violence or threaten international humanitarian personnel.

After careful consideration and assessment, my delegation is going to vote in favour of the draft resolution before us today. It is our belief that it offers a comprehensive and well-balanced approach that emphasizes preventive diplomacy while recognizing the need to be prepared to respond effectively, as conditions warrant. Additionally, we feel that it will send the correct signal regarding the international community's resolve and commitment in discouraging the unacceptable proliferation of human suffering, which has taken a tremendous toll of the people of Burundi.

To conclude, my delegation wishes to underline that, to avert another Rwanda, it is imperative for the United Nations to take the appropriate and necessary steps to prevent the tensions escalating into full-scale civil war and genocide, for not only the countries of Africa, but those of the world at large, are looking to the United Nations for action and leadership. An absence of specific measures would undoubtedly have grave consequences not only for the region but also for the credibility of the United Nations.

The President: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Somavía (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency. Your extensive experience in the United Nations, your personal communications skills and your substantive knowledge of the issues thus all become available to the Council, for which we are most grateful to you.

I had the opportunity, at our last meeting, to comment on the outstanding presidency of Ambassador Albright. I also wish to thank the Ambassador of Burundi for his presence here, for his profound remarks and for the kind words he addressed to me.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his report. The report indicates that, although the situation in Burundi has recently been somewhat calmer than it was in December and at the beginning of January, the Secretary-General continues to believe that the trend is a negative one and that the security situation in the country remains unpredictable and, in his words, "desperately serious". (*S/1996/116, para. 36*)

On the basis of the Secretary-General's report, the Security Council is today in the process of adopting a draft resolution that basically targets those aspects that the international community can foster, so that Burundi can move away from the path of violence.

The main objective is political dialogue. We have all known all along that promoting dialogue is no easy task in this situation; rather, it is much more demanding and difficult than other types of preventive action. That is why the Security Council is appealing to all the parties in Burundi to embark on serious negotiations towards that objective.

It was encouraging to hear from the Secretary-General that his Special Representative and former President Nyerere are working resolutely to promote dialogue, a fact confirmed by the most recent conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). An experienced and respected former Head of State of an African country such as Julius Nyerere can bring to bear considerable influence for dialogue between the leaders of neighbouring Burundi, as can former President Carter, with his well-known commitment to peace. The OAU is playing a regional role of fundamental importance, and the European Union is also providing significant support. In this connection, the Security Council is lending its strongest support to all those who are facilitating the internal political process in Burundi.

The draft resolution reaffirms support for the Convention on Governance and for the institutions set up under it, and states our interest in assisting the parties in their implementation of the agreements reached though political dialogue. It tells the Government of Burundi that we hope that it will take the initiative to promote dialogue and that we are prepared to support it in that endeavour. We want this challenge to be met by all the members of the Government, and by the opposition, the military forces and even the extremist factions.

Our objective is dialogue and national reconciliation in Burundi. If the humanitarian situation becomes critical, endangering the political process and the lives of the people of Burundi, other preventive measures will have to be considered, as long as they are always subordinate to the higher objective of national reconciliation. We hope that the planned Regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region will be a success in this respect.

We take note also of the Secretary-General's repeated assertion as to how dangerous the situation in Burundi is. For this reason, the Security Council is asking the Secretary-General to continue his consultations with the countries concerned and with the Organization of African Unity on a contingency plan — a plan that, if necessary, could serve to support the dialogue that we hope will become a reality in Burundi, or that could provide a rapid humanitarian response if the situation deteriorates — a possibility that we hope will not come to pass. This capacity for a rapid humanitarian response is essential so that in future we will not have a humanitarian crisis in Burundi to deplore.

The Council also decides to remain cognizant of such recommendations as the Secretary-General may make in light of the development of events in Burundi, and reaffirms its decision to respond to any eventuality, taking into account all possible options. In this scenario — which we hope will not come to pass — we would take care that any measure that may be considered would be selective, so as not to adversely affect the population of Burundi, which has already suffered so much.

Many representatives have already referred to the work of the Caucus of the Non-Aligned Movement. I too wish to thank the members of the Caucus and its technical team for their help in producing the draft resolution. As coordinator of the Caucus in February, my delegation worked closely with the non-aligned countries and with the other members of the Council, as well as with delegations which are not members, including the Ambassador of Burundi himself, with whom we have met, jointly and severally, on many occasions.

We can say from first-hand experience that the draft resolution which we are in the process of adopting today — and which Chile resolutely supports — was the result of a serious process of consultation in which all members of the Council and delegations outside the Council gave their all, with the sole purpose of finding a way to enable the people of Burundi to look towards a future of peace and development.

We can affirm with certainty that the Security Council will be following the situation in Burundi very closely, and will be very interested to see the report that the Secretary-General has been requested to prepare in two months' time, and also to hear any other relevant information before then, if this proves necessary.

I shall conclude by pointing out that, as the draft resolution makes clear, the destiny of Burundi is in the hands of the people of Burundi, and, above all, of its leaders, within and outside the Government. The international community is ready and willing to support political solutions, and is on the alert in case it needs to respond to any grave deterioration in the humanitarian situation.

The President: I thank the representative of Chile for his kind words addressed to me.

Mrs. Albright (United States): Mr. President, let me congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency. We are all looking forward to your leadership, which we all know is characterized by wisdom, diplomatic skill, and good humour. Finally, may I wish you productive days and free nights.

I would like to thank everyone for the extremely kind words addressed to me, and, most of all, for everybody's cooperation. Believe it or not, I enjoyed the month and hope that everyone will soon recover from my presidency, which has variously been described as "vigorous" and "firm".

Occasionally in this Chamber the members of the Security Council have the opportunity to try to prevent, rather than to respond to, a breach of international peace and security. Today is one of those occasions. The turmoil within Burundi, fuelled in part by the perpetrators of Rwanda's genocide, and even by radio stations beyond Burundi's borders, is a matter of grave concern to the United States and to others in the international community.

The draft resolution we will consider today reflects the Security Council's determination to prevent in Burundi the kind of massive violations of human rights that consumed Rwanda in 1994. My Government appreciates the work of the representatives of the Non-Aligned Movement in crafting this important and balanced text. The draft resolution calls upon the leaders of Burundi to settle their differences and resolve their fears through dialogue instead of bloodshed, and it asks the Secretary-General to plan, on a contingency basis, for a rapid humanitarian response in the event of widespread violence or of serious deterioration in the humanitarian situation in Burundi.

Although the fate of Burundi is in the hands of the people of Burundi, the Council, concerned regional

organizations, neighbouring States and others can help the moderate elements surmount the pressure for violence that comes from the extremes. We strongly support the efforts of former Tanzanian President Nyerere; the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Marc Faguy; former President Carter; the Organization of African Unity; the European Union and all who are endeavouring to facilitate dialogue and reconciliation. We can do so by keeping the spotlight of world attention focused on the decisions and actions that the leaders of Burundi take. We can recognize the efforts of the existing Government to establish calm, while rejecting those who, by word or action, advocate or perpetrate violence. We can make it clear that we will oppose strongly any effort to destabilize the Government or to seize power by force or other extra-constitutional means.

During my visit in January to Burundi, I told the leaders of the country that the United States will not support or assist any government that comes to power by force in Burundi, and, indeed, would make every effort to isolate any government that comes to power by force from the international community. Also, we can stress the importance of serious negotiations conducted within the framework of the National Debate, agreed upon by the signatories to the 10 September 1995 Convention on Governance. The United Nations considers that Convention to provide the legitimate basis for government in Burundi.

I think it is critical that the leaders of the various factions in Burundi not misunderstand the intentions and motives of the international community. We are not interested in any action that would undermine Burundi's sovereignty; we are not attempting to promote the interests of one faction or group at the expense of another. Our goal is simply to encourage outcomes within Burundi that are consistent with internationally recognized principles of human rights, and with Burundi's own legal and constitutional processes.

The international community can provide resources that may help overcome obstacles to reconciliation. These resources may be in the form of a neutral place for dialogue; human rights monitors; economic aid or assistance in building effective political and judicial institutions. My Government urges the Government and people of Burundi to take advantage of these resources.

There has been some debate in recent weeks about the wisdom of even planning for the contingency that, despite our efforts and those of moderates in Burundi, widespread violence might resume. However, my Government believes this step is essential. Given the horrors of what happened in Rwanda, and the persistence of outrages in Burundi, we would fail in our responsibilities if we did not take this step.

The contingency planning called for in the draft resolution is precisely the type of exercise envisioned when the United Nations established its stand-by arrangement system over the last two years. It is designed to identify in advance the resources that Member States might be willing to make available on short notice, to carry out an emergency humanitarian mission in Burundi. My Government urges other Governments to cooperate with the United Nations and with the United States in this effort. It is an initiative designed to bolster the confidence of moderates in the Government of Burundi and elsewhere within that society, and could save thousands of lives.

My Government also urges the Secretary-General to provide additional security and investigatory personnel to the Commission of Inquiry. I learned of this need first-hand during my visit to Bujumbura in January. The Commission must complete its investigation into the events of the attempted *coup d'état* of 1993, and the subsequent ethnic violence.

Finally, my Government stresses the importance of the Council's commitment in resolution 1040 (1996), and in the draft resolution, to consider further measures, under the Charter, if progress towards a comprehensive political dialogue is not achieved.

The recent report of the United Nations special rapporteur for human rights cited

> "an increasingly marked genocidal trend" *(E/CN.4/1996/16, para. 118)*

in Burundi. Although the courageous efforts of moderates in Burundi to prevent violence provide grounds for hope, we must take very seriously indeed the potential for an upsurge in killing.

The draft resolution is no panacea: it provides no guarantees, but it demonstrates that the world is monitoring events in Burundi closely, and that we are prepared to assist in efforts to promote dialogue and lay the groundwork for social progress. The history of this region tells us that those who commit genocide also commit suicide. Burundi does not deserve that fate; no nation does. Let us do all we can to help the people of

that land avoid that fate, and to build a future based on law and tolerance.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for her kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Martínez Blanco (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): May I first congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are convinced that, given your experience and enormous professional skills, the work of the Council will, under your leadership, be a complete success. You may rest assured of the complete support and cooperation of our delegation. I also congratulate Ambassador Albright for so successfully discharging her responsibilities as President of the Council in February.

Since the Security Council's adoption of resolution 1040 (1996) on 29 January, no significant progress has been made in establishing a dialogue between all the political elements of Burundi as a means of finding a permanent solution or as a way of creating conditions to promote national reconciliation in that country, thereby avoiding a recurrence of the humanitarian tragedy that recently struck the subregion of the Great Lakes.

My delegation believes that the promotion of dialogue among the parties in Burundi remains one of the most realistic means of finding a solution to the crisis there. That is why we believe the international community must make every necessary effort to facilitate that politial dialogue. In this context, we wish to applaud the steps being taken by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, along with the leaders of Burundi, to begin a dialogue as soon as possible under the auspices of the United Nations.

We attach equal importance to the talks being conducted to that end by former Presidents Nyerere and Carter and by the other mediators designated by the Cairo Conference, as well as to the efforts being made by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the European Union. We believe that the international community must not wait until the current political, economic and social crisis in Burundi swells to the point of a humanitarian disaster such as that which occurred in Rwanda. Urgent measures should be taken to prevent the rise of tensions and to eliminate any possibility of genocide in Burundi or of an exodus of refugees. That is why we consider it important that the Secretary-General continue his consultations with the Member States concerned and with the OAU with regard to the measures that could be adopted in support of a broad dialogue and a rapid humanitarian response should the situation in Burundi worsen.

My delegation also believes that the political support given by the international community to the National Debate, agreed to by the signatories of the Convention on Governance, should be accompanied by broad cooperation with the Government to support the economic rehabilitation of Burundi's economy and judicial system and reform its armed forces and police.

It is a source of great concern that over the past year acts of violence have increased against civilians, refugees and international humanitarian assistance personnel in Burundi. Incitement to violence and ethnic hatred can only contribute to destabilizing the security situation in that country even further. My delegation therefore agrees that the Council should condemn such acts in the strongest terms and demand that those responsible refrain from them.

As long as the situation of insecurity persists, it is impossible to expect refugees and internally displaced persons to return voluntarily to their homes. The high risk involved in returning to Burundi has been recognized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international organizations. Even if refugees and displaced persons decided to return, there would be little possibility of their being able to live a normal life, since in many areas of Burundi economic and social activities have been hampered or paralysed by the crisis.

There have already been several attempts by the countries of the region to work together to find solutions to the refugee crisis. Those attempts have been deferred or abandoned because of the lack of political will shown by some of the parties in Burundi. My delegation believes that it is important to take up this issue without further delay at a regional level. We believe that the proposed Regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region could constitute the appropriate framework to deal with the refugee crisis. We therefore support the initiatives of the Secretary-General and the Governments of the region to promote the holding of that Conference.

We wish to conclude by appealing to all the parties in Burundi to cooperate with the Commission of Inquiry established by the Council through resolution 1012 (1995), and to the Government to provide security and protection for the Commission's personnel, as well as for

the personnel of humanitarian organizations, so that they can function effectively. For all those reasons my delegation supports all the terms of the draft resolution now before the Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Honduras for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Fedotov: (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): As this is the first statement by a representative of the Russian Federation in March, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. I also request the United States delegation to convey to Ambassador Albright our gratitude for the way in which she successfully presided over the Council last month.

The Russian Federation is greatly concerned by the complex situation in Burundi, which for a long time has been hovering on the brink of disaster. The severity of the protracted crisis, which has already cost tens of thousands of lives, has generated a wave of refugees and displaced persons. This further exacerbates the situation by threatening to destabilize the region as a whole. For more than two years the Security Council has been paying close attention to the situation in Burundi, and this is the second formal meeting of the Council on this subject in the first quarter of this year in which all the Member States of the United Nations interested in a speedy solution to this problem have participated. We hope that such a manifestation of special interest in Burundi by the international community will give a powerful impetus to achieving a speedy solution.

The draft resolution before the Council today reflects the deep concern of the international community over the situation in Burundi, as well as its readiness to seek adequate and balanced measures to help normalize it. Priority is clearly given to preventive diplomacy, with emphasis on the need for the immediate resumption of a comprehensive and constructive dialogue and the activation of the process of national reconciliation. Only this will put an end to the conflict in Burundi and break the vicious cycle of violence there.

We consider it important to make optimum use of the peace-keeping potential of the Organization of African Unity, other regional organizations, neighbouring countries of the region and other interested States. We believe that preparations should be stepped up for a Regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region, with a view to further consolidating political and economic stability in that region.

At the same time, Burundi extremists of all stripes must be given a clear warning that, should there be any broad escalation of violence or any serious deterioration of the humanitarian situation, the international community would be prepared, if necessary, to take adequate measures for a humanitarian response, from the range of appropriate options available. We strongly urge the parties to the conflict in Burundi to show common sense and avail themselves of all opportunities to achieve a speedy, mutually acceptable settlement, for the good of the people of Burundi. In turn, the international community, as the draft resolution stresses, stands ready to render all necessary support and assistance. Inasmuch as the draft resolution before us gives proper emphasis to the priority the international community attaches to overcoming the crisis in Burundi, the Russian delegation will vote in favour of it.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am sure that with your outstanding abilities and wealth of diplomatic experience you will be able to guide the work of the Council this month to a successful conclusion. I also wish to take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, the Ambassador of the United States, Mrs. Albright, for presiding over the work of the Council last month and for completing the task before the Council.

A few moments ago the Permanent Representative of Burundi, on behalf of the Burundi Government, made a comprehensive statement on the situation in Burundi, which deserves our serious consideration. The Chinese Government has been concerned all along about the development of the situation in Burundi and sincerely hopes that peace and stability in that country will be restored as soon as possible. We have also made our own efforts in this regard. We are pleased to note the common understanding and determination manifested by the highest authorities in Burundi for the solution of the Burundi question. They are engaged in the process of restoring peace and stability in their country so that the overall situation there will move towards improvement. At this point, the Government of Burundi is engaged in its third campaign for the return of peace. All of this is

conducive to stability in the Burundi situation, and we wish to commend and support this effort.

Even though the situation in Burundi is beginning to move in a positive direction, the country still faces many difficulties in the political, security and humanitarian fields. The international community, particularly the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), have made tireless efforts for the proper solution of the question of Burundi. The Secretary-General and his Special Representative for mediation and good offices have made a series of diplomatic and political efforts. A few days ago in Addis Ababa, the Council of Ministers of the OAU gave special attention to the question of Burundi and decided to request the former President of Tanzania, Mr. Nyerere, to continue his good offices as facilitator in the search for a political settlement of the Burundi question.

The draft resolution that the Council is about to adopt indicates that the international community, in striving for humanitarian objectives, will continue to give impetus to a broad dialogue involving all sides in Burundi in order to establish mutual trust, so that Burundi will achieve national reconciliation at the earliest possible date.

We have all along held the view that the internal affairs of a country should be settled by the people of that country themselves. The international community can provide assistance, but it cannot engage in interference in the name of assistance.

The Chinese delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us. However, it is our understanding, with regard to the draft resolution, no matter what kind of action the Security Council takes in the future, including a humanitarian response, it should consult with the country concerned, obtain its consent and broadly canvass the view of all parties. Whether or not the question of Burundi can be appropriately resolved affects not only the economic development of Burundi and the life of its people, but also the peace and stability of the entire Great Lakes region. Therefore, we urge all parties in Burundi to act in the interest of their country by carrying out a broad-based dialogue as soon as possible and responding effectively to the appeals contained in the resolutions of the Security Council to create conditions for an early national reconciliation and to make their contribution to regional peace and stability.

The President: I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): Let me begin by extending to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. We are confident that your outstanding capabilities, experience and wisdom will guide the deliberations of the Council to a productive outcome. I should also like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Albright of the United States, for her successful conduct of the business of the Security Council during the month of February.

My delegation notes with appreciation the Secretary General's comprehensive report (S/1996/116) on the situation in Burundi. It is heartening to note the Secretary General's assessment that the situation has somewhat calmed down lately in the country. Although this welcome turnaround may be partly attributable to the energetic campaigns which the Ambassador of Burundi, in his statement made just a little while ago, characterized as his Government's broad crusade to rally together the population, the national army and the administration for the return of peace in his country, we should certainly take pride in the fact that the Security Council's adoption of resolution 1040 (1996) on 29 January last has made an impact in moving things in this direction. However, we are mindful that the overall situation in Burundi remains volatile and serious enough to warrant the continued vigilance of the international community. We remain deeply concerned at the persistence of violence, the dire humanitarian situation and the continued incitement to ethnic hatred by radio stations.

My delegation wishes to pay tribute to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for the prominent role it has played in monitoring peace in Burundi under trying conditions and with meagre financial resources. It should be encouraged to strengthen its role there by expanding its military observer mission, although the OAU cannot be left alone to bear the onerous burden of maintaining the peace there. Given the far-reaching implications of the eruption of a humanitarian tragedy in Burundi for the peace and stability of the entire Great Lakes region, it is clear that the United Nations must remain alert to ensure stability and peace in the region.

As the situation stands now, the international community faces two crucial challenges in bringing lasting peace and stability to Burundi. One is how to forestall the recurrence of a humanitarian disaster of the kind we witnessed earlier in Rwanda. The other is how to bring about a lasting political settlement by addressing the root causes of the conflict. We view the Secretary-

General's recommendations contained in document S/1996/116 from this perspective. To deal with these daunting challenges, the Secretary-General proposes a two-track approach: the promotion of political dialogue in the context of preventive diplomacy and a contingency plan to avoid a catastrophe.

Political dialogue across the whole political spectrum in Burundi is a *sine qua non*, and the ideal means to resolve the simmering Burundian crisis. But the international community needs a viable alternative in case the track of political dialogue proves ineffectual in bringing about the much-hoped-for mutual accommodation and national reconciliation. Moreover, the two tracks of dialogue and contingency planning are complementary and reinforce each other. International efforts for a political settlement of the crisis through dialogue have a better chance of success if they are backed by a credible contingency plan for a timely response in the event of a serious deterioration of the humanitarian situation. Another important merit of the idea is that good advance planning often pays off by making actual intervention unnecessary. It is our understanding that paragraphs 12 and 13 of the draft resolution before the Council reflect in a balanced manner the widely shared expectations and concerns of the international community in acting upon the Secretary-General's recommendations.

My Government supports and welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General, the Organization of African Unity, the European Union (EU) and former Presidents Nyerere and Carter to promote political dialogue in Burundi. Given the indivisibility of peace and stability in the Great Lakes region, we recognize the importance of addressing the fundamental causes of the internal conflict in Burundi in a subregional context. In this respect, we support the holding of a Regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region and encourage the Secretary-General to intensify his preparations for such a conference in close consultation with Member States concerned, the OAU and the EU.

My delegation stresses that international efforts to facilitate dialogue in Burundi cannot replace the efforts of the Burundian parties themselves to come to terms with one another and to live in peace and prosperity. Since most Burundian parties are currently represented in the Coalition Government under a power-sharing arrangement, the priority of the international effort should be to ensure that all parties abide by the letter and spirit of the Convention of Government so that the Coalition Government can work as it should.

The international community can play a meaningful role to this end by helping to organize a national debate embracing Burundian leaders of all political persuasions and by guaranteeing the implementation of any agreement resulting from the debate. In this respect, we call upon all parties in Burundi to put aside their factional interests and exert political good will towards achieving mutual accommodation and genuine national reconciliation.

My delegation wishes to join previous speakers in expressing profound appreciation to the non-aligned caucus for its hard work in producing the excellent draft resolution before the Council today.

The President: I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Eitel (Germany): I want to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. Your proven skills, your realistic attitude and the down-to-earth way in which you conduct business make us look forward to working successfully under your guidance.

Let me take this opportunity also to convey our gratitude and our appreciation to Ambassador Albright for her very effective way of presiding over the Security Council, which helped us through 29 days — and one long night — of February.

Germany supports fully the statement Italy has made on behalf of the European Union.

As the Secretary-General has pointed out, his recent report of 15 February 1996 represents the fourth time in less than seven weeks that he has brought the issue of Burundi to the attention of the Security Council. The Secretary-General goes on to say that he has done so in the conviction that the situation in the country is desperately serious.

It is therefore most appropriate, Mr. President, that you have provided an opportunity to the members of the Council and to the general membership of the United Nations to express their views on the situation in Burundi and to discuss what the international community should do. As members know, Germany strongly supports this increase in transparency.

Even if the situation at present is somewhat calmer, our deep concern remains. We are concerned at the acts

of violence. We are concerned at the incitement to ethnic hatred. We are concerned that the situation might escalate. We are concerned at the humanitarian situation. Burundi needs serious and comprehensive dialogue leading to a permanent political settlement and national reconciliation. This is not an easy task under the prevailing circumstances. But it is not impossible either. The signatories of the Convention of Government have agreed to a national debate. This should be the framework for the much-needed dialogue.

Dialogue will not be possible in a violent environment. Therefore, all parties, including and particularly those who hold extremist positions, are called upon to refrain from acts of violence. Furthermore, the dissemination in Burundi of propaganda which incites hatred must stop. The radio waves in Burundi should be used to promote reconciliation and dialogue, and to relay constructive information.

It is the responsibility of the Burundi parties to do everything they can to achieve a peaceful settlement. But they are not alone. Efforts are being made to help bring about the settlement by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, by the Organization of African Unity, by the European Union, which has just nominated a special representative for the Great Lakes region, by former Presidents Nyerere and Carter and by the other facilitators appointed by the Cairo Conference. This long list of facilitators alone shows how difficult the situation is.

Governments, in their bilateral contacts, also support efforts to bring about a peaceful solution. My Government is among them. The economic recovery of Burundi, with the assistance of the international community, will only be possible in a peaceful and stable environment.

What happens in Burundi will have repercussions beyond the country's borders and, depending on what road it takes, may pose a threat to the stability of the whole region or reinforce it. Preparations for convening a Regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region should therefore be intensified.

Today, the Council will vote on the draft resolution concerning the situation in Burundi. For the reasons stated, Germany strongly supports this draft resolution and will vote in favour of it.

The President: I thank the representative of Germany for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me very sincerely and warmly to join those who have praised you, Mr. President, and your predecessor.

In late December last, the Secretary-General drew the Security Council's attention to the danger threatening Burundi of a humanitarian catastrophe on the scale of that experienced by Rwanda in 1994. In doing so, the Secretary-General was duly discharging his responsibilities. The delegation of France, in the light of the following two considerations, has studied the report that he subsequently submitted.

First, we must recall the facts: the situation in Burundi remains fragile and worrisome. However, the institutions that emerged from the conclusion in September 1994 of the Convention on Governance must be encouraged to pursue their work to promote peace, restore order and foster national reconciliation. This joint effort of the Burundi authorities, supported by the Security Council, the European Union, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the entire international community, has already borne some fruit.

Secondly, the Council must ensure that its decisions do not run counter to the efforts of the Government of Burundi. It is normal for the Council to demonstrate its vigilance by preparing to come to the assistance of the people of Burundi if the situation so requires. At the same time, such preparations must not lead extremists of every stripe to push the country into the abyss. We must therefore be very mindful of how those primarily concerned, the inhabitants of Burundi, perceive our decisions.

France supports the Secretary-General's proposals aimed at preventive diplomacy, as was also recommended by the OAU Foreign Ministers at their meeting in Addis Ababa on 29 February last.

It is thus important to urge the principal players in Burundi to engage in dialogue and at the same time to bolster the position of the authorities of Burundi by encouraging the President and the Government to work closely together. To that end, the missions carried out by the various mediators of the international community must be supported by the Security Council.

It will then be important to implement preventive measures aimed at defusing dangerous situations. The harmful role of certain radio stations has long been

denounced by the Government of Burundi itself. Measures must therefore be taken to assist it in the task of dismantling these stations. The Government of Burundi has also asked the OAU to increase the number of its observers in the field. The OAU Foreign Ministers recently decided to do just that, and we must welcome their decision.

Finally and above all, the international community must be enabled to respond to an emergency humanitarian situation. We must therefore explore possible options that would allow the international community to respond in the most appropriate manner — and hence in a humanitarian manner — to a disaster, should one occur despite all attempts to avert it.

In the view of the French delegation, the draft resolution prepared by the members of the caucus is responsive to the views we have just expressed. That is why the French delegation will support the draft resolution when it is put to the vote.

The President: I thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to me.

There are still a number of speakers. In view of the lateness of the hour, and with the concurrence of the members of the Council, I intend to suspend the meeting now.

The meeting was suspended at 1.25 p.m. and resumed at 4.50 p.m.

Mr. Wlosowicz (Poland): Allow me to begin, Sir, by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of March. We are confident that with your widely known diplomatic skills, your knowledge and a great deal of optimism, you will successfully conduct the work of this body. Let me also assure you of the full cooperation and support of the delegation of Poland.

I should like also to pay a special tribute to Her Excellency Ambassador Madeleine Albright for the outstanding manner in which she presided over the Council in the month of February.

Only a month ago the Security Council discussed the developments in Burundi. The Polish delegation joined others in expressing its concern about the direction in which the events in the county were evolving. As then, today also we associate ourselves with the statement on Burundi delivered by the Italian delegation on behalf of the European Union.

The situation in Burundi remains a matter of grave concern to the international community. Although the last Secretary-General's report notes certain signs of consolidation of the uneasy peace in the country, the political and security environment in Burundi continues to be tense and volatile. Hence, an intensification of international efforts to avert a further worsening of the situation seems to be imperative.

The draft resolution under consideration reflects the conviction that combined political endeavours on the part of the international community can still be effective and that the possibilities of exerting diplomatic and political influence on the parties concerned have not yet been exhausted and should be adequately enhanced.

At the same time, the draft resolution recognizes that without the firm commitment of the people of Burundi to achieve a lasting political resolution of the conflict, the international community might not be in a position to solve the problems that the Burundian State is faced with. The underlying assumption of the draft resolution before us is that the situation in Burundi has not yet reached a stage at which preventive diplomacy must be replaced with preventive action. Nevertheless, we agree that the Secretary-General should continue his considerations of steps for a rapid humanitarian response in the event of widespread violence or a serious deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Burundi.

The principal message conveyed in the draft resolution is that further evolution of the situation in Burundi will depend both on the parties to the dispute — especially the more radical factions among them — and on the assistance of the international community. It is precisely for this reason that in the draft resolution under debate the Security Council expresses its strong support for the diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, the Organization of African Unity, the European Union, former Presidents Nyerere and Carter and other facilitators appointed by the Cairo Conference. Similarly, the Council extends its support to those forces in Burundi that are ready to pursue political options to defuse the present crisis and to engage in serious negotiations within the framework of the National Debate established in accordance with the Convention on Governance.

Supporting the efforts from within the Country to contain violence and resist factional friction, the Council expresses deep concern at the assistance provided to certain groups operating in Burundi by some of the

perpetrators of the genocide in Rwanda, as well as at the activities of radio stations aimed at inflaming ethnic hatred.

Bearing in mind the potential threat that such forces pose, *inter alia*, to the stability of the region, a political action by all the parties involved in Burundi to reach a durable stabilization which would lead to genuine national reconciliation is urgently needed.

Since reconciliation cannot be attained without an environment of personal security among the faction-ridden people of Burundi, the draft resolution pertinently draws the attention of both the international community and the Government of Burundi to the importance of building a reliable local police force which would not arouse fear among the Burundian population.

The draft resolution also refers to cooperation in the domain of military reform. The professionalization of the Burundian army and its restructuring on a wider base of recruitment, comprising all the ethnic groups, seems to be essential for the stability of the country.

It is important to note that the draft resolution addresses the issue of security of aid personnel who seek to ensure the continued delivery of humanitarian relief to the Burundian population. This is a matter of fundamental importance for the survival of the Burundian State, because humanitarian assistance has become a major factor within the overall Burundian economy, stricken by years of violent political and social upheaval.

Taking into account all the aforementioned reasons, the Polish delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution under consideration.

The President: I thank the representative of Poland for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Mano Queta (Guinea-Bissau)(*interpretation from French*): The delegation of Guinea-Bissau would like to congratulate you most warmly, Sir, on your accession to the presidency of this Council for the month of March. We are convinced that our work will be marked by your wisdom and competence. We would also like to pay tribute to your eminent predecessor, Ambassador Madeleine Albright, Permanent Representative of the United States, on the effective way in which she presided over the Council last month.

This meeting shows once again that despite certain encouraging signs in the development of the situation in Burundi, it continues to be a source of deep concern for the international community.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the thanks expressed to the Secretary-General for his exhaustive and enlightening report on the situation in Burundi, which was submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1040 (1996) of 29 January 1996.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Marc Faguy, to the Organization of African Unity, to the European Union and to the humanitarian organizations for their efforts to find peace and stability for the people of Burundi. In the same spirit, we would like to pay tribute to former President Julius Nyerere, to former President Jimmy Carter and to the eminent leaders of neighbouring countries for the remarkable role they are playing to help that people achieve national reconciliation and restore peace and stability to the region.

The Secretary-General emphasizes, especially in his report, the fact that the settlement of the crisis in Burundi will depend upon the political will of the parties to the conflict. We endorse this view, and we therefore launch once again an urgent appeal to all the parties concerned to participate constructively in the comprehensive political dialogues referred to in the draft resolution we are about to adopt.

My delegation believes that the restoration of confidence and security is one of the essential conditions for United Nations institutions and non-governmental organizations to carry out effectively their task in Burundi. In this regard, we congratulate the President and Prime Minister of Burundi on the positive initiatives they have taken to foster the National Debate and to encourage other activities for promoting peace.

Guinea-Bissau also welcomes the commitment of the institutions of the State of Burundi in the campaign for the restoration of peace by peaceful means and the relatively positive signs mentioned in the Secretary-General's report. We urgently ask the Burundi parties to take into account the national interests of the State, to begin a dialogue on a wider basis and implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

We hope that the adoption of the draft resolution under consideration, which shows once again the determination and commitment of the international community, will encourage a frank and constructive

dialogue between all the parties in Burundi so that they can overcome their differences and lay the foundations for national reconciliation and national reconstruction.

We shall therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

The President: I thank the representative of Guinea-Bissau for his kind words addressed to me.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Botswana.

The situation in Burundi continues to be a source of deep concern for the international community. The political and security situation have deteriorated steadily since the assassination of the democratically elected President in 1993, resulting in a grave humanitarian situation. Acts of violence and the general climate of insecurity are making it difficult for the personnel of international humanitarian organizations to continue their operations. This unstable political situation has had a negative impact on the productive sectors of the economy. The displacement of tens of thousands of people has dealt a severe blow to the agricultural sector, which contributes about 90 per cent to the national economy.

The growth of extremist groups both inside and outside the country is most worrying, to say the least. Even more disturbing is the attempt to annihilate moderate political forces that are prepared to seek a negotiated political settlement in Burundi. The international community has repeatedly called for negotiations, to bring an end to the crisis. Unfortunately, extremists are determined, increasingly, to engage in acts aimed at destabilizing and deposing the Government and rendering the country ungovernable. Concerted efforts have been made by some to remove President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya from office, while others have intensified attacks on strategic installations in the countryside.

Botswana supports an early negotiated settlement to the political stalemate. We urge the people of Burundi to do all in their power to engage in negotiations aimed at bringing an immediate end to the hatred festering in their country's body politic. Their political leaders must rise above their petty quarrels to save their beautiful country from total collapse and chaos.

Botswana is strongly convinced that only a political solution in which the rights of all the people of Burundi, irrespective of ethnicity, will be protected and respected can end the carnage and bring peace and stability to that hapless country. My delegation appeals to the people of Burundi, of all political persuasions, both inside and outside the country, to begin, without delay, the process of negotiations aimed at bringing about national reconciliation. We especially call on all the political forces — all of them — that are committed to a search for a solution through political dialogue to gain courage from the fact that they have the support of the international community. The international community stands ready to assist all those who are committed to a peaceful settlement.

While political dialogue is undoubtedly the option of first choice, the international community cannot afford to watch impassively as extremist elements become emboldened and create conditions which are likely to lead to a severe deterioration in the humanitarian situation in Burundi. It is imperative therefore that the international community should be united on the need for contingency planning for a robust response in the event that the humanitarian situation deteriorates further and violence becomes widespread and uncontrollable. The international community has learnt a bitter lesson from the genocide in Rwanda. There can be no justification for lack of preparedness in the event of an outbreak of violence on a large scale in Burundi.

I resume my function as President of the Council.

The next speaker is the representative of Norway. I invited him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aass (Norway): I join in the many, well-deserved congratulatory remarks that have been expressed to you, Mr. President.

In substance, Norway supports the comments expressed in particular by the presidency of the European Union. Specifically, as underlined in the European Union statement, there is no viable solution outside political dialogue. Dialogue is the only way to achieve lasting peace and national reconciliation in Burundi.

My Government has been paying a great deal of attention to the situation in the Great Lakes region and has adopted a plan of action for assistance to the region. As part of this plan, the Government has allocated in excess of $20 million in bilateral humanitarian assistance and support for peace and reconciliation efforts in Rwanda and Burundi for 1996.

Norway strongly supports the international mediation efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, as it does those of the Organization of African Unity and prominent African leaders such as former President Nyerere of Tanzania. We also welcome the recent appointment by the European Union of a special envoy for the Great Lakes region. We hope that this international presence has impressed on potential perpetrators the seriousness with which the international community views violent threats to the process of negotiated change. From the outset we have supported the efforts to convene an international conference on cooperation, security and stability in the Great Lakes region and we hope to see progress achieved soon.

The situation in Burundi is not without encouraging signs. The "*Campagne de Sensibilisation*" — the raising of awareness — which the Government has promoted seems to have contributed to a decline in violence, and we strongly hope that this development will continue. However, there is still reason to be deeply concerned about the security situation for the civilian population as well as for international humanitarian relief agencies and their workers.

In our view, without a strong commitment from the Government to reconciliation and peace, as well as adequate security guarantees and respect for human rights, it will not be possible for the international community to provide the necessary assistance to the authorities for rehabilitation and national reconstruction.

It is with this humanitarian aim in mind that the international community has discussed possible measures and contingency plans for improving the security situation in Burundi. These measures should be appreciated for what they are intended to be: a means of support, a handshake for the Government's own efforts towards peace and reconciliation.

The President: I thank the representative of Norway for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the African group.

I should like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, upon your accession to the Presidency of the Council. Your extensive experience and renowned talents as a veteran diplomat augur well, we are sure, for the success of the Council's work. We are proud to see a highly skilled son of Africa presiding over this august body and participating actively in consolidating peace in Africa and in the world.

We take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, the Ambassador of the United States, Mrs. Madeleine Albright, for her praiseworthy efforts in presiding over the Council last month, when it dealt with African issues.

The Security Council is considering the situation in Burundi for the second time in a month. That assuredly is a sign of grave concern on the part of this body and on the part of the international community as a whole, in view of the duration of the crisis and the persisting instability of the country. Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation is seriously deteriorating, the political institutions are hamstrung and the economy and infrastructure of the country are gravely threatened.

Can it ever be repeated enough to the parties concerned in Burundi that violence is a poor adviser; that recourse to force, far from resolving problems and differences, only aggravates them and that the only path to safety and security is that of dialogue and national reconciliation? That alone can foster a peaceful settlement that will spare the people of Burundi from bloodshed.

The relative improvement of the climate of security in Bujumbura is a positive sign of which we take note, and we encourage the significant efforts made by the Government of Burundi to restore peace and security. However, at the same time we cannot fail to note the absence of tangible progress towards a solution to the substantive problems the country is experiencing. We urge the people of Burundi, particularly the political and armed forces, to demonstrate a firm commitment to dialogue, peace and national reconciliation. We launch an appeal to all these forces to work together to implement the Convention on Governance in order to restore and consolidate peace and security and bring democracy back to Burundi.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), which opportunely sent military observers to Burundi and extended their mandate by three months last December, has already considered the situation in the country through its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention,

Management and Resolution. That organization, under the leadership of its acting chairman, is making tireless efforts to assist the parties in Burundi to achieve a lasting political settlement. To that end, it is important that consultations and coordination in support of joint political dialogue be continued between OAU, the Security Council and the United Nations Secretariat.

The international community must continue and strengthen, by all appropriate means, its assistance and encouragement to the parties concerned in Burundi for the commencement and speedy conclusion of such a dialogue. In this context, it seems to us that silencing the radio stations sowing hatred and discord is one of the priority needs.

We reiterate our appeal for greater cooperation between the countries of the region in their search for a lasting solution to the problems of insecurity and instability. At their last meeting, held in Addis Ababa from 26 February to 28 February 1996, the Council of Ministers of OAU reiterated its support for the convening of a regional conference on security, stability and development in the Great Lakes region.

In the humanitarian field, urgent and increased assistance to displaced persons in Burundi and to Burundian refugees in neighbouring countries is necessary, especially within the context of the implementation of the Bujumbura Action Plan.

Following the Cairo Conference, held on 28 and 29 November 1995, a second international conference on the Great Lakes region, in which the Presidents of Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Zaire and Tanzania will participate, will be held in Tunis next week. This conference will consider a number of issues, particularly humanitarian issues relating to refugees and the economic and security situation of the region. It will contribute to the restoration of security, peace and stability and will be a landmark on the road to development and reconstruction in Burundi and in all the countries of the subregion.

Finally, we launch an appeal to the Burundi authorities to improve measures to ensure the security and protection of the personnel of international and non-governmental organizations so as to facilitate their humanitarian efforts.

The President: I thank the representative of Tunisia for his lavish and touching words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Rwanda, on whom I now call.

Mr. Bakuramutsa (Rwanda) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me, on behalf of the delegation of Rwanda, to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are convinced that your wisdom and wide experience will enable the Security Council to assume fully its responsibilities to the satisfaction of the Member States of the Organization.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Albright and her delegation for the important work done under her presidency during the month of February.

The delegation of Rwanda welcomes the initiative to hold an open debate on Burundi. This initiative, which we could regard as a sort of African palaver around a tree, is necessary for us, the Africans within this Organization, who constitute a majority but who, unfortunately, represent the least privileged continent, some of whose countries are a fixture on the Security Council's agenda. This open debate allows us to express ourselves and to hope that one day we will be adequately heard and understood.

My delegation would like to approach the Burundi question mainly within the subregional context of the Great Lakes countries. The ills suffered by Burundi are a contagious gangrene that affects the entire subregion. That is why, while respecting the specific and particular nature of each country of the subregion, there are points that merit common consideration and that affect Burundi.

The first point is the institutionalization of impunity within the subregion. This point reached its culmination during and after the genocide in Rwanda. Not only were the criminals not prevented from committing their misdeeds, but neither were they pursued in the subregion. On the contrary, in some cases they have even benefited from special protection. The result of this culture of impunity has been to encourage criminals of all stripes, from Rwanda as well as from Burundi. They have organized, trained and armed themselves, and they have stirred the beginnings of a genocide in Burundi.

Through its inaction or the inadequacy of its response, the international community has encouraged the impunity that has been institutionalized in the subregion.

Consequently, the problem of Burundi cannot be solved unless the subregion's culture of impunity is eradicated.

The second problem is *laissez-faire*: the typical hands-off attitude which fosters the deterioration of the situation in the subregion. Rwanda has lost one eighth of its population as a result of hate propaganda spread through radio broadcasts. Everyone recognizes the powerful impact of radio broadcasts promoting hatred in Rwanda. The same kind of radio floods the Burundian countryside with messages of hatred and calls for extermination. No adequate action has been taken to prevent these perpetrators of crimes against humanity from sowing hatred among the people.

There is similar *laissez-faire* with respect to arming and training criminals and infiltrating them into Burundi. The culture of impunity to which I have referred has enabled the criminal perpetrators of genocide in Rwanda to forge links with extremists in Burundi by helping them in the extermination techniques for which they are notorious. We hope that one day this South-South cooperation will take a more positive turn. Meanwhile, no one gives a thought to stopping these criminals. To the contrary, Burundian army forces have been harshly criticized and domestic movements attempting to organize in order to avert the kind of extermination that has taken place in Rwanda have been labeled extremist. We are duty-bound to hail the various Burundian institutions whose composure has enabled them to safeguard the country's sovereignty and the stability of its population in the face of varied provocations.

The subregion's third problem is a lack of consultation with the countries concerned. Many solutions and decisions are devised, and the international community then confronts the countries concerned with a *fait accompli*. A country's problems as explained by its citizens are not being properly addressed. Rather, initiatives are taken and are imposed on the country. One example is the idea of military intervention in Burundi. On whose behalf would such an intervention be carried out, and against whom? How are these foreign forces to tell good Burundians from bad Burundians? They will not be wearing badges. In the meantime, no one talks about dismantling the radio transmitters that spread hatred. No one talks about putting a stop to infiltration by criminals. These are what the people of Burundi have told the international community they need.

Yet if these two problems were solved, the people of Burundi could enjoy a respite that would enable them to come together in constructive dialogue. Such a respite is vital for the peoples of the Great Lakes region; it cannot be achieved through United Nations-style big conferences, lifting with ideas and behind-the-scenes observers — and gauged more by their cost than by their impact. Such conferences will not get the people in the hills of Burundi to lay down their weapons and come to an understanding; they will not stop the criminal perpetrators of genocide.

The fourth element I think is important for the region is the economic situation, which was fragile at the outset and which is quickly deteriorating because of the political situation. Hopeless poverty is not conducive to peace in the subregion.

We must change our methods and our approach to solving African problems in general and the problems of the Great Lakes countries in particular. First of all, the Great Lakes countries themselves must participate actively in the search for solutions to their problems. Countries like Burundi have created institutions that will enable them to resolve their own problems, such as the Convention of Government and the various commissions that have been set up to resolve specific problems. The international community has a duty to let these institutions work in an atmosphere of calm by preventing infiltration by criminals and by silencing hate-mongering radio. If there is to be outside military intervention, that should be its sole purpose.

We hail two great sons of Africa, President Julius Nyerere and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, for their initiative to bring peace to the subregion. This is the kind of initiative to support. Similarly, the Carter Center and President Carter himself deserve commendation.

To help the people of Burundi take their own problems in hand, the culture of impunity in the subregion must be eradicated, which is all the more possible given that the nature of this crime affects all of mankind. Once again, the international community has a role to play and responsibilities to shoulder. It knows perfectly well where the criminals are. It has the means to destroy or jam hate-mongering radio transmitters. It must shoulder its responsibilities before the region flares up and new genocide is committed.

Economic support for the countries of the subregion would contribute to easing tensions.

We want to draw the attention of the international community to organizations that take advantage of the poverty of the subregion to create programmes and projects that only benefit their organizers without much impact on the recipients. Other projects, so-called development projects, are political and divisive in nature; these include "environmental" projects now being planned. They should be redesigned to become holistic, not only in their conception, but also in the sense that they should cover areas affected by the presence of refugees. They must avoid promoting the "industry of poverty" in the subregion.

I wish to conclude by calling once more for greater participation by the Great Lakes countries in decisions affecting their fate, and for far greater involvement by national institutions and subregional and regional organizations in finding solutions for this part of Africa.

The President: I thank the representative of Rwanda for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the Congo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Abibi (Congo) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of the Congo, Sir, has many reasons to be pleased to see you presiding over the work of the Security Council this month. Among these reasons we would highlight your qualities as a seasoned diplomat, your wisdom and your extensive experience and understanding of United Nations affairs, as well as the very warm fraternal relationship between our two delegations. We are convinced that under your leadership the Security Council will do remarkable work.

We wish also to convey to your predecessor, Ambassador Madeleine Albright, hearty congratulations on the highly professional manner in which she conducted the Council's business and on the results achieved during the month of February.

My delegation endorses the statement just made by the Permanent Representative of Tunisia on behalf of the African Group.

Burundi and Congo have many common ties; our location on the same continent and in the same subregion, central Africa. Our mottoes are the same: "Unity — work — progress". Congo, like other countries of the subregion, stands behind the efforts of the people of Burundi, with the active support of the international community and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), to overcome their current difficulties and to start out on an authentic process of national reconciliation.

This was the principal concern of the representatives of the States of our subregion when they met a few months ago in Brazzaville within the framework of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, a Committee currently under the chairmanship of the Foreign Minister of the Congo. In the statement — the Brazzaville declaration — which they adopted then, the States members of the Committee expressed their deep concern at the ongoing tension and violence in the central African subregion. They noted that the situation has caused immense loss of human life and undesirable suffering for the population, including massive flows of refugees. The resulting insecurity is undermining the development efforts of the Governments and peoples of the subregion, despite their wealth of resources.

My country is of the view that this is still a valid analysis and believes that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security in the subregion rests with the peoples and Governments of the countries concerned. That is why we have always encouraged efforts along these lines, specifically, in the case of Burundi, those which help our brothers in that country to consolidate the process of national reconciliation and the restoration of peace.

From this point of view, in our opinion the Convention on Governance remains, in the current circumstances, an essential element in laying the foundations of an effective national reconciliation. But any lasting solution, if it is to survive the challenges facing Burundi and other countries of the subregion, will need close cooperation between the international community, the OAU, the subregional institutions and the countries concerned.

My country welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative and strongly supports the initiatives of the OAU, former President Nyerere and others of good will to promote political dialogue between our brothers in Burundi despite all the odds against them. The path of dialogue is indeed the only course that will allow Burundi to renounce once and for all the mindset of confrontation, violence and exclusion and promote true national reconciliation and

guarantee the stability and security necessary to improve living conditions for the people.

That is the fraternal message which we send once again to our brothers in Burundi on the occasion of the Security Council's adoption of a draft resolution which, in our opinion, takes into account every aspect of the current situation in Burundi.

The President: I thank the representative of Congo for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Nigeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ayewah (Nigeria): Permit me, on behalf of the delegation of Nigeria, to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. Your well-known diplomatic skills and sense of humour assure my delegation that the conduct of the business of the Council is in good hands.

I should like to pay a tribute to Ambassador Madeleine Albright, the Permanent Representative of the United States, for her gracious and effective stewardship last month.

We have read with interest the latest report on Burundi, and commend the Secretary-General on his bold and imaginative efforts in presenting the current state of play in that country. Our delegation, as a member of the Council for the past two years, was privileged to participate in two missions at Burundi. On the basis both of our experience on the ground during the two missions and of the available literature on the subject, we cannot but share the concerns and frustrations expressed in the Secretary-General's report.

But, more importantly, we must draw attention to the overriding need to do something promptly and in a preventive manner to stop Burundi slipping further into violence and bloodshed. While there has been general concern about the events in Burundi, it has not been possible for the international community to match this concern with concrete action. My delegation agrees with the observation that any solution to the crisis in Burundi will depend on the combined political will of the parties in conflict and the willingness of the international community. Furthermore, any action that is contemplated in this regard must have the support of the people of Burundi if it is to succeed.

Nevertheless, we should not allow the international community to be held hostage to a veto from or, the sensitivities of any particular group in Burundi. The majority of the people in Burundi desire peace and are prepared to live with one another in peace. Experience has shown that, whenever the Security Council speaks with one voice, the majority of the people in Burundi do listen. As we see it, it is high time that something concrete was done by the international community to strengthen the hands of all the moderate forces in Burundi. Already, the increased attention being paid to Burundi by the international community has somewhat stabilized the situation there in recent weeks. We need to build on that.

The nature of assistance to Burundi must be multidimensional, socio-economic, technical and diplomatic, and must involve efforts at the national, subregional and international levels, all working in tandem.

In this regard, the efforts of the Government of Burundi to promote dialogue are crucial. The improved coordination and cooperation between the President and the Prime Minister is a good development in that direction. Closely related to this is the proposal to hold a Regional Conference for Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region to address the issues of political and economic stability as well as peace and security in the Great Lakes States. We hope it will be possible to find a mutually acceptable basis for such a vital meeting between the countries of the region.

At the continental level, we would like to commend the contributions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in particular that of its Observer Mission. The enormous sacrifice made by the OAU to help arrest the situation in Burundi needs to be strengthened by financial and logistical support from members of the international community. It would be unfortunate if this important instrument of preventive action were not sustained due to lack of resources.

My delegation therefore hopes that the Security Council will give serious consideration to steps that should be taken in a preventive manner to supplement and strengthen the various initiatives and diplomatic efforts. We also hope that the donor countries will help address the socio-economic difficulties of the people of Burundi.

With regard to the draft resolution the Security Council is about to adopt, we believe it is a balanced text in that it recognizes the primacy of dialogue and painstaking negotiations in trying to resolve the serious socio-political problems in Burundi. It also expresses the intention of the Security Council to support those processes and maintain a hands-on policy on developments in Burundi, including contingency planning for possible humanitarian intervention, should that become necessary. My delegation would, however, like to sound a note of caution: any such efforts or preparations must respect the sovereignty of Burundi and the expressed wish of its Government. Any initiative that attempts to sidestep this condition carries with it serious difficulties and could, in the end, be counterproductive.

In conclusion, let me reiterate the appeals that have been made to all the forces and political groups in Burundi to give peace a chance and cooperate with the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations, its agencies and bodies and all other personalities engaged in seeking a solution to the crisis in Burundi and in assisting the people to live in peace.

The President: I thank the representative of Nigeria for his kind words addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/1996/162) before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Botswana, Chile, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1049 (1996).

The representative of Burundi has asked to speak once again, and I now call on him.

Mr. Terence (Burundi): The adoption of this resolution leads me to express, on behalf of my Government, our sincere thanks to all the members of the Security Council for this important development in the process of the search for peace in my country.

Some operative paragraphs deserve more praise than others. One of them, operative paragraph 6, deals with the decision of the Council to establish a United Nations radio station. This initiative would have an extraordinarily beneficial impact on public opinion and on Burundi society. We think that this kind of innovation deserves gratitude from my country, and, of course, we hope that the implementation of this paragraph will not remain a dead letter. On all grounds, we think that a resolution of this type is far more realistic than other options, which might jeopardize all the efforts made in this process towards peace.

In conclusion, Sir, upon your assumption of the presidency I congratulated you and also stated how beneficial and important the task you are discharging is. However, I was expecting to have this opportunity to speak of Botswana — of the central role your delegation has been playing for the last six months and of the close ties my delegation and yours have established since my arrival six months ago. Therefore, it is needless to emphasize how thankful we are for the central role your delegation has been playing and for the commendable dedication of Your Excellency to the cause of my country, of Africa in general and of the United Nations as well.

We think, Sir, that if you carry on with this momentum, our people, our Government and the other main actors in my country might be in a position to finally reach the ultimate goal — not only the dialogue that we have been proposing and on which we have been insisting, but specifically, and most importantly, the ultimate goal, which is national reconciliation.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Burundi for the very kind words he addressed to me and to my delegation.

There are no further speakers.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.